The MEDICAL MISSIONARY

The Daily Task

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The MEDICAL MISSIONARY

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MORNING ROUNDS

By SISTER M. HELEN, R. N.

AT 9.00 A. M., the morning dispensary work being finished, we started out on our visits. It was nurse Shorot's turn to accompany me; therefore, she brought the list of cases. There were five ante-natal and two sick babies to be seen, besides fifteen post-natal cases, two of which were ten-day visits. (Ordinarily, the mothers are visited every day for the first six days after delivery and then again on the tenth day to see if their progress is favorable and if they are following instructions.) Ready for whatever the day might bring, we stepped into the *gori*—a box-like carriage, drawn by ponies—our usual conveyance as our patients are scattered over a large area.

Our first visit was to Krishmari Rai, a Hindu mother. Her husband, a sweet-meat seller, made only a few annas a day, so that there was barely enough rice for the family of five small children. The house had only one room. The mother was lying on a mat on the floor in a little dark, damp hallway (so small that we could scarcely squeeze into it), because, she explained to us, this was the only place for her to stay. According to her caste rules, the mother must remain in isolation thirty days after child-birth. Nevertheless, we tried to persuade her to move into the room for fear she and her two-day-old baby would contract a cold from the dampness. Finally, she promised to move on the sixth day after the first purification ceremony. She complained of feeling chilly and wanted some medicine which would warm her body. After looking around, we found an old ragged quilt, but she didn't want us to use it because it would have to be burned when the isolation period was over.

THEY ALL LOVE SISTER HELEN

Next, we went to see Fatima Bibi who lived in a mud house in a Mussulman settlement. Thick mud walls and two small windows closed with wooden shutters kept out all hopes of sun and air. Fatima's baby was just six days old and on our arrival we found the mother sitting upon the floor holding her baby tightly between her knees and shaving its scalp with an open blade razor. Shaving the head is part of a religious rite which takes place on the sixth day—although, frequently, up to the age of four or five years, it is the custom to shave the heads of both boys and girls during the hot season. The eldest daughter brought little low stools and we were invited to sit down. The shaving was completed within a few minutes and very well done, not a scratch to be seen. We complimented her on having done so well and she smiled and replied that she had had plenty of practice, being the mother of ten children.

After bathing the baby, Fatima proudly brought out a bright-colored silk dress, trimmed with gold braid. This, we duly admired and put on the baby. Then she blackened his eye brows and lashes to beautify him and we went on our way to visit three more patients near by.

A half mile further on we visited Raphia Khatou, a bright-eyed young Mussulman mother. She and her husband, a prosperous lawyer, lived in a large house, fairly well kept, but situated in squalid surroundings. Raphia was upstairs in a bright, airy room, not on the floor, but on a regular bed made up with clean sheets. She had been educated in Calcutta and, knowing a few words of English, greeted me with: "Good-morning, Sister." Her husband came in to enquire about her health and beamed at his new eight-pound baby son of which both were very proud.

Our next patient was Shundari Dabi, a young Hindu mother of fifteen. She was staying at her

mother's house, as it is the custom among both Hindus and Mussulmen for the first baby to be born under the maternal roof. The day before we had gone through the miserable two-room bamboo house until we had located the little mother in a four by six hut with a tin roof and mud floor. Due to lying on that damp floor, she had contracted a cough and fever. We had advised her mother to take her into the house as she might develop pneumonia. To our surprise and satisfaction, this had been done and she was lying on a bed of clean straw in the main house. Her mother having been frightened by the thought of her daughter's developing pneumonia, had dispensed with the usual period of untouchability.

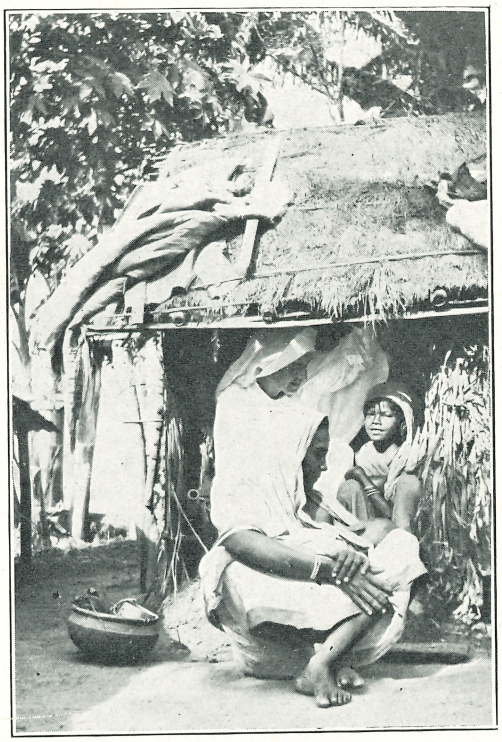
Farther along on the same street, we came to a better class district. The family of Brahmins on whom we were to call, lived in a large brick building. They were well educated and did not observe the isolation custom, so we were permitted to go in by the front entrance. The house was furnished in European style and our patient lay in a large room adjoining the front verandah. As usual, her baby was not lying beside her, but in a separate nursing bed. This was the mother's fifth baby, and the health center's nurses had always attended her. Her maid who was an intelligent woman, had been taught how to care for her; both mother and baby had been bathed and the beds neatly made. Because they were progressing well, our visit was short.

In the best residential section of the city we made a tenth-day visit to a Brahmin family. When we entered the mother was up and bathing her baby. (Indian mothers are always up on the sixth day if not before, unless there is some complication.) We gave her instructions about the care of her baby and she, in perfect English, thanked us for all that we had done for her. This mother had an M. A. degree and was the first English-speaking patient we had ever had. Many of the educated Hindu women speak English, but as our work is mainly with the poorer classes we do not often come in contact with them.

Leaving this section with its fine houses and gardens, we wended our way along a narrow crowded lane and stopped before a very ramshackle building made of bamboo and flattened tin cans. Our patient was in the rear. As there was no side entrance, it was necessary for us to pass through the house to reach her. The mother-in-law greeted us with: "You can't come in now, come this afternoon." We explained that we couldn't, so she told us to wait. We waited until the large earthen jugs of water and cooking utensils were removed to another room; if our clothes accidentally touched any food it would have to be thrown away. Before entering the patient's room, I told the husband that he would have to let us pass through the house again on our way out. The day before, we were asked to go out by a rear gate and jump across a wide open drain; but it had rained in the meantime and everything was wet and slippery and we decided that we had better not take a chance of falling into it.

After a ten-minute's drive, we came to another large Mussulman section of mud huts. There was only a path leading from the main road, so our *gori* stopped and we walked down the lane. It was our first visit and there were no numbers on the houses. "Where is Abdul Majid's house," we asked the first man we met. He answered *"jain na"* (don't know), and on we went a little further till me met an old woman. We asked her if she knew where a baby had been born the night before. She was a little bit deaf, but after repeating the question several times, her face brightened and she said: *"Ha! Ha! Oi dike,"* and pointed to a distant Mussulman temple. We followed her direction going through several narrow lanes until we came to a group of children playing under a water tap. Again we stopped and made inquiry. They all shouted: "Ha! Ha!" and ran ahead calling to us to hurry up. They dashed up to a door yelling, *"Khulo, khulo, Mis Shaib ache"* (open, open, a lady is here). We went through the mud hut into the back yard where a woman was sitting on the ground cooking over a little stove made by cementing a hole in the earth just large enough for one pot to rest on it—this kind is used in all the poor homes. Smilingly, she greeted us with: *"Salaam,* don't you

(Continued on page 8)



WHERE HOUSEKEEPING IS SIMPLIFIED

OUR LADY OF THE FLOWERS

* * * "And I took root in an honorable people, and in the portion of my God, His inheritance—I was exalted like a palm tree in Cades, and as a rose-plant in Jericho; as a fair olive tree by the water in the streets was I exalted * * *"—Eccles. 24. Lesson for the Feast of the Assumption.

Always the association of Flowers with Our Lady—the lovely suggestion of eternal spring in Her Heart—so that the dedication of the month of May to Her became less a deposition of antique goddesses than a gesture of inevitable right.

"Of a rose, a lovely rose,
Of a rose is al myn song."
(Circa 1350)

Thus the poets, and earlier writers in date; yet are they but the tributes of educated belief. More touching is the unsophisticated homage implicit in the flower names of the simple folk. They make as beautiful a litany as I know—all the more so because of their extraordinary simplicity. Here is none of the extravagance of Spencerian conceit, yet how homely it all is, how redolent of good English clay and honest English hearts. Lady's Bower (*Clematis Flammula*) with its myriad honey-sweet tiny flowers. The gold or purple or cream or crimson blossoms of Lady's Fingers (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) of the hedgerow, Sweet Lady's Smocks (*Cardamine pratensis*) that recalls the exquisite song from "Love's Labour Lost"—

"When daisies pied and violets blue
And Lady Smocks all silver white,
And Cuckoo buds of yellow hue
Do paint the meadows with delight."

"THE WANDLIKE LILY WHICH LIFTETH UP AS A MAENAD ITS MOONLIGHT-COLOURED CUP"

And Lady's Slipper, the dainty native orchis (*Cypripedium Calceolus*), so rare a find nowadays. The handsome, lustrous Lady's Mantle (*Alchemilla vulgaris*), that riots in northern pastures, the golden downy blossom of Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*), which, of old, housewives used as rennet to curdle milk. Nor does this by any means exhaust our Lady's floral Trousseaux. She has cushions and laces, and looking glass and garters, thimbles and seal, and a score or more simple treasures of the field and common.

In the North of England when Spring in open-handed largesse, bedews the hedgerow with the blue jewels of the Speedwell, simple faith called the wide-eyed blossoms "Mary's Eyes," and, although not explicitly concerned with her, we can here note another touch of the same fine faith that called the pansy "Herb Trinity," because of its three distinct petals on one stalk. Again that beautiful song of Shakespeare's, "Hark! Hark! The Lark!" recalls to us that the Marigold was Our Lady's favorite flower. The monks in mediaeval times, so they say, gave the "Gold Flower," as it used to be called, the prefix Mary, with the story that she loved to wear it in her bosom. That is why Shakespeare calls it "Mary buds."

The dedication to Our Lady of "The Wandlike lily which lifteth up as a Maenad its moonlight-colored cup" was inevitable. Texture, form, hue, sheen, perfume—all express an exquisite purity.

(Continued on page 8)

A NEW SCHEME TO FIGHT THE MALARIA MENACE

His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, Sir John Anderson, is undertaking this year two new schemes to fight the malaria menace. He says in part:

"The other experiment to which I wish to refer marks a complete departure from the methods we have hitherto employed in Bengal.

"In the past we have attacked the malaria problem mainly from two angles. We have treated with quinine and cinchona and other febrifuges the people who were actually suffering from malaria and the treatment has undoubtedly justified itself by reducing both the amount of sickness and the death rate.

"This, of course, was a measure aimed at cure rather than prevention. On the preventive side, remembering that malaria is a mosquito-born disease, we have attacked the mosquito itself by methods such as flushing, spraying and the cultivation of larvacidal fish, methods all effectual if persisted in but in the long run costly and calling for continuous and co-ordinated effort by the people of the locality concerned.

"The method we now propose to put to the test aims primarily not at exterminating the mosquito, the carrier of the malaria parasite, but at preventing the mosquito becoming infected.

"The method depends on the fact that mosquito is itself only liable to infection at certain periods of the year. If during those periods we can ensure that the human beings from whom the mosquito collects the malaria parasites shall themselves be noninfective, we shall prevent the spread of the malaria without having to complete the immense task of exterminating the mosquito.

"It has been discovered that, while the administration of quinine reduces and may apparently eliminate the traces of malaria in a human being, that same human being may continue to be infective to an anopheles mosquito and an unsuspected source of danger to others whom that mosquito may attack.

"A drug has now become available called plasmoquin which, it is claimed, will, if taken with quinine for three days, render the patient noninfective to mosquitoes.

"The present proposal, therefore, is to administer this drug with quinine on a large scale in a selected area at a time of the year immediately prior to the period when the mosquito becomes liable to infection.

"If the claims made by the manufacturers (and apparently borne out in laboratory experiments) are justified, it is obvious that, provided the area treated is large enough and the administration of the drug within that area is universal, it should be possible to prevent the further communication of malaria within a given area and the only risk then would be the importation of malaria from outside.

"This again could be minimized by the gradual extension of the area in which all human beings were rendered non-infective by means of the plasmoquin treatment.

"Unfortunately, the treatment is expensive, but the government has decided to introduce its use during the current year in an area of approximately fifty square miles in this district at a cost estimated at Rs. 20,000.

"As I understand it, all that will be required of the people will be that, whether they think they have malaria or not, they shall on three successive days during the forthcoming hot weather period take a prescribed dose of quinine and plasmoquin. A single man, woman, or child not taking the dose prescribed, may remain infective and be the cause of his village becoming a focus for infection, which will neutralize the scheme over a wide and overspreading area around."—*The Statesman.*

DACCA

"A woman with three baskets on her head and a child on her hip called on us the other day," Sister Frances writes. "She set her wares down in front of the nurses' home—a snake-charmer had come to entertain us!

"It happened to be the nurses off-duty time, so in a few minutes a crowd had gathered. One by one she took out her pets who proceeded to crawl about in a leisurely way. If one got out of reach, she sent her little three-year old daughter to drag it back by the tail. Then the mother told her to drape the snake about her little self and collect pennies from the crowd. The woman got only a few pice (large copper coins) for her hour's performance and even then one nurse demanded 'a real show—a snake fight.'

"I then saw my first cobras. The woman spoke rudely to her pets who raised their tiny heads, which became flattened out as big as a hand. They repeatedly stung the woman's hands, seemingly without effect. She stayed for about an hour and then putting the snakes back in the baskets, the baskets on her head and the child on her hip, she went on her way."

DR. AGNES McLAREN (1837-1913)

(Note: This is the continuation of the abridged translation from the French of the life of Dr. Agnes McLaren, the great pioneer doctor who initiated Catholic medical mission work in the Punjab.)

Synopsis: Dr. Agnes McLaren was the daughter of Duncan McLaren, a Presbyterian, and one of the foremost citizens of Edinburgh, and Priscilla Bright, a Quaker. As a young girl, Agnes was a devoted friend of the poor. At the age of thirty-seven, she went to Montpellier and studied, at the university there, to become a doctor. She boarded with the Franciscan Hospital Sisters and lived an irreproachable and almost austere life. After she obtained her medical degree, she practiced in Cannes where there was an English colony of some importance.

In the last chapter, Agnes, after making a retreat in Lyons, annually, for twenty years under a Catholic priest, Father Perra, was given the grace to embrace the Catholic Faith. She was baptized on November 30, 1898.

CHAPTER VII

The Third Order of St. Dominic

Some months after receiving baptism, and making her first Communion, Agnes, fresh with the graces of her conversion and desirous of making them fruitful to the last degree, traveled towards the Jura Mountains, stopping at the little station of Monteferrand to go to the Dominican convent of Bethany, erected quite near. Although for some time she had been in sympathy with the work of the Dominican Sisters, there was another powerful motive which attracted her to Bethany, and that was to become better acquainted with their special work, that of the care of penitents. At Bethany, penitents were received as the children of the house, clothed in the beautiful livery of St. Dominic—"The Order of the Lily" and permitted to share freely in the society of the irreproachable religious. Agnes was most enthusiastic about this work and admired very much Father Lataste, the first promoter of this idea.

However, she did not go to Bethany just for this purpose, either, but to receive Confirmation at the hands of Mgr. Petit, Archbishop of Besancon, a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic. The Sister in charge of the Chronicles of the Monastery, in recording this event, wrote:

"Sunday, June 18, 1898. Mass at 7.30 a. m. celebrated by Mgr. Petit, assisted by M. L'Aumonier. After the Mass, during which several beautiful pieces of music were played, Monsignor intoned the Veni Creator. Then he delivered a short discourse, full of wisdom, knowledge and poetry. During this, he addressed an Englishwoman who had come to be confirmed. It was very good of Monsignor to choose our humble little Chapel of Bethany for the coming down of the Holy Ghost. The youngest novice acted as godmother and with the lady who was to be confirmed, recited the Creed, the Pater Noster and the Ave Maria. After the ceremony, Monsignor gave Benediction and recited Sexte. It was then 9 a. m."

Now, Agnes had to think of returning to Cannes. She had already made public the step she had taken. Many Catholic friends congratulated her; others extended their esteem and affection.

At Cannes, she continued her good works and completed her religious instruction, helped in that by Cardinal Bourne whom she already knew. She had had the happiness of meeting him during one of her journeys from England to Rome in 1895. In the midst of her occupations, however, she was not forgetful of Bethany. She renewed her friendship, not by returning to the Mother House, but in visiting nearby in Provence, a house of the order of especial importance, that of Bethany of St. Baume, or the Grotto of St. Mary Magdalen. In order to visit this Monastery, which was perched high on the hill of Saint Baume, it was necessary for her to travel over rough and rocky roads with steep precipitous sides. She succeeded in reaching it tired, but happy.

Her life among the religious was most edifying. In the morning she was present at the Community Mass and received Holy Communion with the community. Then she went back to her cell to lie on a plank bed. When she got up again, she continued her prayers or talked with the Superior on the excellence of the work, or the means of doing good there. She who since her childhood had always loved nature, was enchanted with the forest rising up the mountain sides around the gray granite crag out of which the Grotto of St. Mary Magdalen had been hollowed. Could she climb up there, she wondered. She decided that at least she would try. She traveled in a small country cart to the old tree where the road proper ends and then with a guide, she reached the holy grotto. In the garden of the Bethany of Montferrand there had been an artificial St. Baume; but here, was the reality in all its nakedness, its majesty and austerity.

What a difference there was between this place and Cannes with its beautiful sunshine, graceful shoreline, orange and palm trees, gay and sumptuous villas, feast and concerts. Here were bare and rugged rocks, a forest with primitive half wild vegetation, a pure and revivifying atmos-

FAITH

Thy world, O God, a Poem is!
I do but imitate
The broken rhythms of thy streams,
Thy bending trees and harmonies
Of sunsets and of dreams.

Thy Universe an Anthem is!
All that thou canst create—
Suns, systems, and a grain of dust
Fit, line on line, in the divine
Narration. O! I must

Gather the little words I find
Scattered around about . . .
Each fallen leaf, each curving bough
And flake of snow—all things that flow
Along the here and now.

Then as I read a single verse,
(So true, so perfect!) Doubt
in the Superlative design
That moulds my heart and every part of
all, I do resign.

MARY D. THAYER.

phere, landscapes which recalled Judea, a half-cultivated plain where silence and recollection reigned supreme, a wonderful region where the souls of the pure and holy could listen to the voice of the thrice holy God.

At St. Baume, Agnes became filled with the spirit of God and when she returned to Cannes she poured it out on others. The desire to become a Tertiary of the Order of St. Dominic grew within her. For that reason, she went to Rome in 1900, armed with a letter of recommendation from the Superior of Bethany, Father Hyacinthe Marie Cormier, Procurator General of the Order. Then, to prepare herself for her reception into the Order, she made a Retreat at the Convent of the Cenacle in Monte Marno. Here, she made for herself a solitude within this solitude. Her director was much struck by the high spirituality of her thoughts and her desires for spiritual progress. She edified the community by the exactness of her fidelity to the rule and by keeping silence. At the end of her retreat, she was received into the Third Order. From this time onward, she had a spiritual family to rejoice her heart and to assist her in her works of zeal.

Her love for her Dominican family showed itself more and more, particularly towards the College and Monastery of the Dominican Fathers who were given the charge of the Faculty of Theology in Friburg, Switzerland, by the Holy See. Although she esteemed all Catholic Schools, she believed that the school of Friburg responded best to the needs of present-day thinkers; that it helped to dissipate their prejudices and to make them understand, accept and taste the harmony of Catholic dogma and its Divine teachings in relation to the needs of the human heart.

So careful wherever she was to look after the diseases of the body, she loved to see the Priests. Brothers and Sister, give themselves up absolutely to caring for the ills of the soul, using the remedies advised by St. Augustine: "The charity of truth and the truth of charity."

(To be continued)

THAT MARY MAY LEAD US TO THE SACRED HEART

This is the general intention of the Apostleship of Prayer for May, Mary's month.

How fitting it is that Mary should lead us to the Sacred Heart, for where better could she lead us and who could lead us more surely? Throughout all the ages Catholics have been known for their devotion to Mary, not to Mary for Mary's sake but to Mary because she is the Mother of God. For nine months Mary cherished that most Sacred Heart within her own womb, who could know it so well? For thirty-three years Mary responded to all the demands of the most loving heart the world would ever know. When her own heart was pierced with sorrow by the mortal wounds our sins had inflicted on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Mary in imitation of her Lord echoed the sentiments of those wonderful words from the cross: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do," and became our mother and our most powerful advocate for all time.

The power of the Mother of God as an intercessor has been manifested so clearly and so unmistakably at Lourdes, at Loretto, and in many churches dedicated to her name, need we ever doubt it? Isn't it the most reasonable thing in the world that by honoring Mary we give glory to God who chose her to be His Mother and that by placing ourselves under her guidance, she will lead us more quickly and more surely to that Heart of Hearts to whom she of all the world is the closest?

THE NEW PREFECT OF PROPAGANDA

We take especial interest in the very good news that following the conferring of the red hat on His Eminence Pietro Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, he received the appointment of Prefect of S. Congregation of Propaganda Fide. His Eminence paid our Society a visit here in Washington, and, in lieu of his experience as Apostolic Delegate to India from 1916-1919, has given us the benefit of his invaluable advice and assistance.

The Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries is a religious community founded for the purpose of bringing medical aid to the foreign mission field. Please address enquiries to: Dr. Anna Dengel, Catholic Medical Mission House, Brookland, Washington, D. C.

MORNING ROUNDS

(Continued from page 3)

remember me?" We found that it was a woman we had cared for the year before when her baby had been born. She invited us to come and sit down. The patient, a girl of about fourteen, was lying on a mat on the floor with her baby beside her.

"Is she your daughter?" I asked.

"No."

"Is she your daughter-in-law?"

"No."

"Well, then, what relation is she to you?" I persisted.

"She is my *sothin,*" she answered, hesitatingly. "You see," she went on, "my husband was angry when the last baby was a girl—he wanted a boy—and he married this girl and brought her here."

"And what is this baby—a boy or girl?"

"A girl."

"Good!" Nurse Sharot exclaimed. "It serves him right."

Perhaps it did, but if the husband were displeased again there would be nothing to prevent him from marrying a third time.

It was getting late and we wanted to take a short cut to our next case, so we told the *gori* driver to go by way of a narrow *guli* just wide enough for one vehicle. The city is full of such lanes. After going only a short distance, we discovered that there was a sweeper's cart ahead. He refused to move until he had loaded his cart. It was drawn by oxen whose movements reminded one of a slow-motion camera. There was nothing to do but to sit back and keep cool. Finally we got started again. Just as we reached the last turn before the main road, we found to our dismay the lane blocked by a heap of bricks. The wall which flanked the lane on either side was being repaired and there in the middle of the road they had dumped a load of bricks. We found the owner, and he, after a few minutes' search, located a couple of coolies who threw the bricks over the wall, enabling us to proceed on our way.

Finally, we stopped in front of a narrow, dirty path and walked up to the rear entrance of a large three-storied house. Our patient, Parul Dabi, was a pretty young Hindu mother who, although her father was a wealthy merchant, had been given practically no education. There were twenty-five rooms in the house, but she was obliged to stay in a little rear room, so tiny that she couldn't stretch out full length. We remonstrated with her mother for keeping her in such a place, but her only answer was: "What was good enough for me, is good enough for my daughter." In spite of her discomfort, the young mother was smiling and didn't complain. When we left, the older woman followed close on our heels with a lot of cow-dung water which she sprinkled generously on the path we had contaminated.

When we started for home it was nearly one o'clock, and there was a long drive before us. We suggested to the *gori* driver that he make the horses go a little faster, but he said that it was bad to make them run in the heat. There was nothing for us to do but to settle back in our seats and reflect on the futility of trying to hurry the East.

HEAVEN'S IN THE DISTANCE

God's Eye is ever seeking
The wee things done for Him
And they shall light the shadows
Where Death waits stern and grim.
So, lift your burden gladly
Nor falter, fear nor fret,
For Heaven's in the distance—
And God does not forget.

—*Brian O'Higgins.*

We wish to call the attention of our readers to a book entitled the "Prophetic Biography of Jesus Christ," by Rev. V. H. Krull, C.PP.S., Ottawa, Ohio. In this work the author shows how minutely the life of Christ was foretold hundreds of years before His birth. We feel that this is an addition to the bibliography on this subject in that it is approaching the Life of Christ from an unusual angle. Copies may be procured from the author. ($1 postpaid.)

OUR LADY OF THE FLOWERS

(Continued from page 4)

One can leave it at that till we meet in Italian, German, Flemish and Spanish art those Madonnas of the Rose—the rose hedge, the rose garden—and see, equally inevitable, that for her it should be "roses, roses all the way." Is she not the Rose of all the world that down the Alleys of Time shines afar?

We are an honorable people, among whom she took root; who shall say, as long as the English countryside endures, that we have entirely cast her out?—*The Catholic Times.*

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